AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A venous cannula comprising:

an elongated flexible body member having a tubular wall having an exterior and defining a bore therein and having an intake end and a discharge end;

a tip portion formed at said intake end and having a plurality of radial openings formed in said wall;

a rigid helical support element embedded in said tubular wall and extending from said discharge end of said elongated body member to said tip portion; and

a cage member ~~fixed~~ bonded to the exterior of said wall proximal to said intake end and having a plurality of longitudinally stringers and a plurality of annular rings attached to an outer surface of said plurality of stringers, said cage member being disposed so that all of said plurality of radial openings in said tip portion are covered by said cage member and ~~remain open to the flow of blood~~ to maintain adjacent heart tissue walls spaced apart from said plurality of radial openings to permit free flow of blood between the bore and the exterior through said plurality of radial openings.

2. (Previously presented) The venous cannula of claim 1 wherein said stringers are stiff relative to said body member.

3. (Previously presented) The venous cannula of claim 1 wherein said plurality of stringers are on an outer surface of said tip portion.

4. (Previously presented) The venous cannula of claim 1 wherein said plurality of stringers and said plurality of rings are in a common cylindrical plane.

5. (Previously presented) The venous cannula of claim 1 wherein said plurality of stringers are on an outer surface of said plurality of rings.

6. (Previously presented) The venous cannula of claim 1 wherein additional set of apertures is formed in spaced relation to said tip portion and wherein an additional cage member having rings and stringers is disposed to cover a second set of radial openings.

7. (Previously presented) The venous cannula of claim 6 wherein said stringers of said additional cage members are on an outer surface of said tubular wall.

8. (Previously presented) The venous cannula of claim 6 wherein said stringers of said additional cage members are stiff relative to said body member.

9. (Original) The venous cannula of claim 6 wherein said stringers and said rings are in a common cylindrical plane.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Previously presented) The venous cannula of claim 1 wherein said plurality of stringers are uniformly and circumferentially spaced in direct contact with said tubular wall.